INUIT PHILOLOGY.

How Esquimaux Talk with White Men.

THE OLD LANGUAGE AND THE NEW.

Useful Glossary of a Strange Tongue.

OLD-FASHIONED SAVAGES.

The Esquimau language, though comprising but few words, is one that is difficult for foreigners to acquire and equally difficult to write, owing to the existence of sounds that are not heard in any of the civilized tongues and not represented by any combination of the letters of the English alphabet. Though somewhat guttural it is not unmusical, and for the sake of euphony final consonants are often omitted in conversation. As for instance, the Inuit name for Repulse Bay, Iwillik, is more frequently called "Iwillie," a really musical sound. And so with all such terminations. It is not difficult for a stranger to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the language to enable him to converse with the natives who inhabit the coasts and are in the habit of meeting the whalers who frequent the northern waters in the pursuit of their avocation. There is a kind of pigeon English in use in these regions that enables the strangers to communicate with the natives and make themselves understood, though they would understand but little of a conversation between two natives. As an illustration, the word "notimer" means "where," and "ki-yete" is used for any form of the verb "to come;" therefore, "Notimer ki-yete" would be understood by them to mean, "Where do you come from?" Now one native addressing another would not use that form at all, but would say "Nuke-pe-wickt," which bears no resemblance to the words used in the whalers' language. Also, take the same word "notimer" and follow it with "owego," which is used for any form of the verb to go, and you have "Notimer owego," "Where are you going?" The native, however, would say "Namoon-ock-pict," or perhaps "Nelle-ock-pin" (which way are you going?). Still they would readily understand the expression familiar to the whalers and traders, as the words are really Esquimau words, but used in a free, broad sense; as, for instance, the reader would understand a foreigner who used the word "speak" instead of the other words expressing the same thought, as "tell," "ask," "talk," &c. "Speak Charles come here" would convey intelligence to your mind and be understood as well, though not so readily until accustomed to it, as "Tell Charles to come here."

COINED WORDS.

There are also words that neither belong to the Esquimau nor any other language, but are very valuable and expressive. "Sel-low" has been used for so long a time to express the idea "sit down," and the application of the latter term is so broad, that "sellow" has been incorporated into the language and was understood even by the natives of the interior whom we met on our sledge journey and who had mo f them never before seen a white man. As, for example, you would ask, "Emik sellow cattar?" ("Is there any water in the pail?") and be thoroughly understood, though a native would say, "Cattar, emik ta-hong-elar?" Another useful word adopted from the unknown is "seliko," which means to kill, shoot, break, bend, scratch, destroy or any kindred thought. "Took too, seliko, ichbin?" (Did you kill any reindeer?) The old fashioned way of putting it is, "Took too par?" But that would only be understood by the natives.

OLD FASHIONED NATIVES.

Our interpreter, Ebierbing (Esquimau Joe), says that the language has undergone considerable change since the advent of white men, and even since his early boyhood, and sometimes would tell me of meeting strangers, who came into camp, from the interior who spoke "old fashioned," as he called it. This, he said, was especially the case with the inhabitants of Southampton Island, called by the natives "Sedluk." Though situated directly in the line of travel of the whalers in Hudson Bay, all of whom pass directly along its rocky coast, it is almost an unknown territory. It is known to be inhabited, but its people are seldom seen. The head of the island is not far from Iwillik, and the frozen straits that separate the two countries would afford an admirable route of communication. The island is said to be well stocked with game and the inhabitants are comparatively comfortable. While our party was in Hudson Bay a whaler was wrecked on the western coast of Southampton, north of Cape Kendall, and the crew easily secured a reindeer the day they landed. They remained there but two days and then sought the other shore of Rome's Welcome, so as to be in the course of the other whalers then in the bay, in order that they might be picked up by them. They said, however, that if compelled to remain on the island they had no doubt of their ability to secure plenty of game to maintain them, or at least to keep off scurvy. Last year the captain of the wrecked vessel visited the island at the scene of the wreck in order to save as much as possible from destruction. He went in a whaleboat with a crew of Iwillik Esquimaux, and while there met with a party of the natives. I subsequently had a talk with the captain's Iwillik crew and inquired about the people of Sedluk. They told me that their language was "old-fashioned" and that their arms and implements were mostly of the obsolete pattern of the Stone Age.

AN ISOLATED RACE.

Though living so near together there had been no communication between the nations; and only once before, about three years previous to my visit to Hudson Bay, when a whale had gone ashore on Sedluk, an Iwillik native on board the vessel that killed the whale went with the crew to claim the carcases and brought news of the foreign country and its people. I was told that the language of these people of Sedluk was similar to that spoken by the fathers and grandfathers of the Iwillik tribe. They had evidently the same origin, and while one became improved by intercourse with foreign nations and adopted words from foreign tongues, the other remained as it was in the past, unimproved by interchange of ideas. I have never seen anything like a full glossary of the Esquimau language, and believe that at this time, when Arctic affairs are attracting so much attention everywhere, a list of the most important words used in communicating with the natives, and the method of uniting them, would prove quite interesting. My experience was that though we at first found it difficult to talk with the interior tribes they soon caught the idea and conversation became easy. Innukpizookzook, an Ooqueesiksillik woman, who with her husband joined our party on Hayes River, learned the method of communication in two weeks, so that it was as easy to hold conversation with her as with any of those who came with us

from Hudson Bay and had been accustomed to the peculiar language since their birth. In fact as a general thing we found the women much brighter than the men, not only in acquiring language but in understanding the descriptions of the wonderful things in the white men's country.

UNDEVELOPED ARTISTS.

It used to be an endless source of amusement to the men, women and children in the Arctic regions to look at the pictures in the illustrated books and journals. Colored maps were also very attractive to them, and the large type in advertisements apparently afforded them great pleasure. They were not at all particular to hold the pictures right side up; sidewise or upside down seemed quite as convenient. Though admiring pictures exceedingly, I did not find them very proficient draughtsmen, and yet nothing seemed to give them more pleasure than to draw with a lead pencil on the margin of every book they could get hold of, and my Nautical Almanac and "Bowditch's Epitome" are profusely illustrated by them. Their favorite subjects were men and women and other animals, always drawn in profile and with half the usual number of feet and legs visible.

The following glossary comprises all the words in general use in conversation between the natives and traders in Hudson Bay and Cumberland Sound, and a thorough knowledge of it would enable the student to make himself understood throughout the entire Arctic, with the assistance of a few signs which would naturally suggest themselves at the proper time:—

A.

Arrow—Kok'-yoke.
Arm—Tel'-oo.
Another—I-pung'-er.
All night—Kuee-en'-nah.
Angry—Mar-me-an'-nah.
All—Ter-mok-er-mingk.
Autumn—Oo-ke-uk'-shark.
Afraid—Kay-pe-en'-nah.
A little while ago, to-day—Wateh-eur'.
Ask—O-kow-te-vah'-vor.
Antlers—Nug'-le-you.
Axe—Oo'-lae-mar.
Aurora Borealis—Ok-sel-e-ak-took, ok-shan'-ak-took.
Air—Ar-ne-yung'-ne-uk.

B.

Bear—Nan'-nook.
Bear (cub)—Ar-took'-tar.
Bullet—Kok'-yoke.
Bow—Pet-e'-chee.
Bird—Tig'-me-ak.
Boots—Kum'-ming.
Blood—Owg.
Black—Muk'-tuk.
Belch—Neep'-shark.
Brother—An'-ing-er.
Bones—Sow'-ner.
Bag—Ik-pe-air'-re-oo.
Book—Muk-pet-toe'-up.
Belt—Tep'-shee.
Bubber—E-din-yer'.
Bashful—Kung-we-shook'-pook.
Blue—Too-mook-took.
Breastbone—Sok'-e-djuck.
Backbone—Kee-mik'-took.
Belly—Nong'-ik.
Brain—Kok'-i-tuk.
Beard—Oo'-mik.
Beads—Shoong-ow'-yah.
Blanket—Kep'-ig.
Break—Sel'-l.-ko.
Bark—Oo-we-uk'-too.
Boil—Kul-ak'-pook.
Bite—Kee'-wah, O-kum-wik'-poo.
Breathe—Ar-nuk-ter-re'-uk.
Build snow house—Ig-loo-le'-yook.
Burn—Oon-ok'-took.

C.

Caps—See'-ah-dout.
Cheek—Oo-loo'-ak.
Codfish—Oo'-wat.
Come here—Ki-yeet', ki-low', ki-ler-root'.
Clothing—An'-no-wark.
Clear weather—Nip-tark'-too.
Cold—Ik'-kee.
Cup—E-mu'-sik.
Cairn—In-nook'-sook.
Clam—Oo-wil'-loo.
Child—Noo-ter-ark'.
Cloud—Nu'-yer.
Chief—Ish-u-mat'-tar.
Cook—Coo-lip-sip'-too.

D.

Dog—Ki'-mak, King'-me.
Doe (old)—No-kal'-lee.
Doe (young)—Nu-ki'-etoo.

Day, or to-day—O-gloo'-me.
Day after to-morrow—Oo-al-e-an'-nee.
Day before yesterday—k-puk-shar'-nee.
Duck—Me'-ah-tuk.
Dangerous—Nang-e-yang-nak'-took.
Dog harness—Ar'-no.
Dead—Tuk'-ah-wuk.
Dark—Tark, ta-ko'-noo.
Down—Tow'-nau-ee.
Dawn—Kow-luk'-poo.
Door—Mat'-dor, par, koo'-tuk.
Daughter—Pun'-ne.
Dress—An-a-wark'-took.
Drown—Ki-yar'-wuk.
Drink—E'-mik-took.
Dream—See-muk'-took-pook.

E.

Ear—See'-a-tee.
Eyes—E'-yah.
Ermine—Ter'-re-ak.
Elbow—E-quee'-sik.
East—Tar'-wan-ne.
Early—Oo'-blah.
Every day—Kow'-ter-man.
End for end—Ig-loo'-an-ar.
Entrails—Ein'-er-loo.
Egg—Mun'-nik.
Eat—Ner-ee-uk'-took-too.
Empty—E-mah'-ik-took.

F.

Fox—Ter-re-ar-ne'-ak.
Fire—Ik'-o-mar.
Fish—Ik'-kal-uk.
Fur—Mit'-kote.
Foot—Is'-se-kut.
Face—Kee'-nark.
Finger ring—Mik-e-le-rar'-oot.
Female—Nee-we-ak'-sak.
Far—Oon-wes'-ik-poo.
Farewell—Tare-wow'-e-tee.
Finished—In-nuk'-par.
File—Ag'-e-yuk.
Flipper—Tel'-ar-roak.
Faster—Ok-shoot'.
Fork—Kok'-e-jerk.
Fringe—Ne'-ge-yer.
Feather—Soo'-look.
Fingers—Arg'-ite.
Finger (index)—Tee'-kee-ur.
Finger (second)—Kig-yuck'-tluk.
Finger (third)—Mik-ke-lak.
Finger (little)—Ik-ik-ote.
Full—Tut-tah'-took.
Fly—E-sow-ook-suk'-too.
Fight—Neng-nik-par'.
Feel—Tep-sik-ak'-took.
Freeze—Keegk-e-yook'.
Forget—Poo-yuk'-too.

G.

Gun—Suk-goo'-te-gook.
Goose—Ne-uk'-a-luk.
Gloves—Po'-ah-lo.
Good—Mah-muk'-poo.
Glad—Kuyen'-a-mik.
Gone—Peter-hong'-a-too.
Go—Owd-luk'-poo.
Give me—Pel'-e-tay.
Grave—E-le'-wah.
Green—Too-me-ook'-took.

H.

Hair—New'-Yark.
Hand—Ar'-gut.
Husband—Wing'-ah.
Hard bread—She'-bah.
How far?—Karn'-noo-oon-wes'-ok-ik-te'-vah.
Half—E-lar'-ko.
Hate—Took-pah'.
He—Una.
How many—Kap-shay'-ne.
Hard—See'-see-yoke.
Hand me—Ki'-jook.
Hill—King-yar'-ko.
Hungry—Kahk-too.
Hear or understand—Too-shark'-poo.
Handle—E'-poo-ah.
How—Kon'-no.
Heart—Oo'-mut.

I.

Ice—Se'-ko.
Iron—Sev'-wick.
I, me, mine, &c.—Oo-wung'-ar.
Ice chisel—Too'-woke.
Instep—Ah-look.

J.

Jump—Ob-look'-took.
Just right—Nah-muck-too.

K.

Kettle—Oo-quee'-zeek.
Kidney—Tock'-too.
Kill—To-ko-pah'-hah.
Knee—Nub-loo'-te.

Knuckles—Nub-we'-yan.
Kiss (rub noses)—Coon'-e-glew.

L.

Long ago—Tap-shoo-man'-ne.
Lead—Ok'-ke-gook.
Lip (upper)—Kok-tu'-we-ak.
Lip (lower)—Kok'-slu.
Leg—Ne'-yoo.
Loon—Kok'-saw.
Look—Tuk'-ko.
Large—An'-no-yoke.
Love—Kou-yah-e'-yah-vick.
Liver—Ting'-you.
Lake—Tus-sig.
Light—Ood'-luk, oo'-blook.
Laugh—Ig-luk'-too.
Lift—Kee'-wik-took.
Leak—Arng-mi-yook.

M.

Musk-ox—Oo'-ming-munk.
Midnight—Oo'-din-wark.
Moon—Tuk'-luk.
Man—Ang'-oot.
Mouth—Kang'-yook.
Medicine man—Arng'-ek-ko.
Male—Nu-kup'-e-ak.
Much—Am-a-suet'.
Meat—Neer'-kee.
Meat cooked—Oo-yook'.
My son—Ear'-ken-ear-ar.
Marrow—Pat'-ak.
Mountain—King'-yi.
Musquito—Keek-toe'-yak.
Make—Mix-uk'-too.

N.

Night—Oo'-din-nook.
Needle—Mit'-cone.
Nose—Tling'-yak.
Neck—Koon-wes'-ek.
Near—Kon-e-took'-ah-loo.
No—Nok'-er, nok-i'.
Noon—Kig-yuk-kah'-poo-kik-ah.
Naked—Ar-noo-wi-lee-*ak*-took.
Nest—Oo'-blood.
Narrow—Ah-me'-too.

O.

Old—Oh'-to-kok.
Outside—See-lah-tau'-ne.
Oar—E-poot.

P.

Powder—Ok'-de-ur.
Pretty—Mah-muk'-poo.
Promise—Pe-dah-go-wah'-nah.
Paper—Al-le-lay'-yook.
Ptarmigan—Ok-ke-ge'-ah.
Pan—Ah-wap'-se-lah.
Pail—Kat'-tar.
Pin—Too-be-tow'-yer.

Q.

Quickly—Shoo-kul'-ly.

R.

Reindeer—Took'-too.
Reindeer (big buck)—Pang'-neuck.
Reindeer (young buck)—Nu-kar-tu'-ar.
Reindeer (fawn)—No'-kark.
Rumrod—Kok'-dook-sook.
Red—Owg.
River—Koog.
Rabbit—Oo-kae'-ut.
Rock—We-ar'-zook.
Rain—Mok'-uk-too.
Raven—Too-loo'-ah.
Rapids—E-tem-nark'-zeack.
Ribs—Too-lee-med'-jit.
Run—Ood-luk-too.
Ride—Ik-e-mi'-yuk.
Resemble—Ar-djing'-er.
Remember—Kow-ye-mu'-wuk-er.

S.

Sledge—Kom'-mo-tee.
Seal—Net'-chuk.
Seal (large)—Ook'-jook.
Seal (bladder nose)—Nets-che'-wuk.
Seal (fresh water)—Kosh-e geer'.
Seal (jumping)—Ki-o-lik.
Snow—Ap'-poo.
Stockings (long)—Ah-luk'-tay.
Stockings (short)—E-king'-oo-ark, e-nook-too.
Sun—Suk'-e-nuk.
Star—Oo-bloo'-bleak.
Skin—Am'-ingk.
Swan—Coke'-jeuk.
Sea or salt—Tar'-re-o.
Salmon—Ek'-er-loo.
Salmon (black)—Ish'-u-ark.
Stone—Wo'-ark.
Snow knife—Pan-an'-yoke.
Small—Mik-e-took'-e-loo.
Some—Tah-man'-ar-loo.

So—Ti'-ma-nar.
Summer—Ow'-yer.
Shirt—Ar-tee'-gee.
Spring—Oo-ping'-yark.
Same—Ti'-ma-toe.
Sister—Nur-year'-ger.
Scraper—Suk'-koo.
Snow stick—An-owt'-er.
Snow block—Ow'-ik.
Spectacles—Ig-eark'-too.
Spoon—Al'-lute.
Sinew—Oo-lee-ute'-ik.
Sick—Ah'-ah, Ar-ne-ok'-took.
Scissors—Kib-e-ow'-te.
Smoke—E'-shik.
Stranger—Ahd'-lah.
Sunrise—Suk-ah-ne-uk'-poke,
Sunset—Ne-pe'-woke.
Sit down—Ing-e'-tete.
Stand up—Nik-e'-we-tete.
Steam—Poo'-yook-took.
Sand—See'-ah-wark.
Snowing—Con'-nuk-too.
Snow shovel—Po-ald'-er-it.
Speak—O-kok'-po.
Sleep—Sin'-nik-poo.
Ship—Oo'-me-ak.
Smoke (verb)—Pay-u'-let-tee.
Scratch—Koo'-muk-took.
See—Tak'-ko-wuk.
Smell—Tee'-pee.
Steal—Tig'-lee-poo.
Sing—Pe'-se-uk.
Show—Tuk-o-shu-ma'-uk-too.
Sweetheart—E-veuck'-seuck.

T.

To-morrow—Cow'-pert, Ok'-ar-go.
Two or three days ago—Ik'-puk-shar'-nee.
Tallow—Tood'-noo.
Teeth—Ke'-u-tee.
Tongue—Oo'-guark.
Tent—Tu'-pik.
Thunder—Kod'-ah-look.
Thunderstorm—Sel'-ah-look.
Trousers—Kok-ah-leeng'.
There—Ta'-boir.
Thanks—Quee-en'-nah-coo'-nee.
These people—Ta'-ma-quar.
Those people—Tuk'-o-quar.
Then—Oo-bah'.
Thread—Eve'-er-loo.
Tusk—Too'-rok.
Tenderloin—Oo-lee-oo-she'-ne.
Tail—Pam'-e-poong'-gar.
There (in the distance)—Tite'-quar.
Track—Too'-me.
Tired—Too-ki'-yoo.
Thumb—Koo-bloo'.
Thick weather—Tock-se-uk'-too.
Thirsty—E-me-rook'-too.
Thick—Eb-zhoo'-zhook.
Thin—Sah'-took.
Tatoo—Tood-ne'-uk.
Think—Ish-u-mi'-yuk.
Tell—Kow'-you-vor.

U.

Ugly—Pe'-ne-took.
Understand or hear—Too-shack'-poo.
Up or north—Tap-an'-ny.

W.

Walrus—I'-vick.
Water—E'-nik.
Wood—Ke'-yook.
Woman—Ah'-de-nok.
Woman's boat—Oo'-mi'-eu.
Whale—Ok'-bik.
White man—Kob-lu-nar.
Wife—Nu-le-ang'-er.
Whalebone—Shoo'-kok.
Walrus hide—Kow.
White gull—Now'-yer.
Wind—An'-no-way.
White—Kowd'-look, Kok'-uk-too.
When—Kong'-er.
Wait—Watch-ow'.
Where—No-ti'-mer.
What is—Kish-oo'.
Winter—Oke'-e-yook.
Window—I'-o-lar.
Warm—O'-ko.
Wolf—Ar-mow.
Whip—Ip-pe-row'-ter.
What—Shoo'-ar.
Wing—E'-sar'-ro.
Wide—Se-lik'-too.
Wrist—Nub-gwok.
Walk—Pe-shook'-too.
Write—Titch-e-ruk'-kut.
Whisper—E-shib-zhook'-took.

Wake up—Too-pook'-poo.
Want—Tah-oom-ar-wung'-ar.
Work—Sen-uk-euck'-too.
Wink—Kob-loo-shook'-too.
West—Tar'-wan-ne.

Y.

Yesterday—Ik-puk'-shur.
Young man—Nu-ku-pe-air-we'-nee.
Young woman—Nu-le-uk-sar-we'-nee.
Yes—Ar'-me-lar.
You—Ich'-bin.
You and I—Ooo-bah-gook'.
Year—Ok-ar-ny.

PHRASES.

Go ahead—At-tee'.
What is the name of—I-ting'-er.
What are you making?—Shu-lah-vik'.
Who is it?—Kee-now'-yer.
Where are you going?—Nah-moon-okt'-pict.
Where do you come from?—Nuk-ke-pe'-wict.
I have found it—Niu-e-vah'-hah.
Is it good?—Pe-e-uke'.
I don't know—Am-e-a'-soot.
Shut the door—Oo'-me-yook.
Open the door—Mock'-tere-yook.
Do just as you please—Is-you-muk-e-yang'-ne.
I guess—Shu'a-me.
Give me a light—Ik-ke-de-lung'-ar.
Give me a drink—Im'-ing-ar.
Give me a smoke—Pay-u'-let-e-de-lung'-ar.
I don't know anything about it—Kow-you-mum-e-mum'-me.
Where does it come from?—Nuk-ke-nu'-nar?
Come in—Ki-low'-it.
Right here—Muk'-ko-war.
Who is it?—Kee-now-yer.
I am not sure—Shu'-ah-me.
Is the meat done?—Oo-par'?
Too much—Pee-lo-ak'-poke.
Too little—Mik-ke-loo-ak'-poke.
Which way?—Nel-le-ung'-nook.
A poor thing—Nug-a-leen'-ik.

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